

Message Text

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20

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1806

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 960

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI, PO

SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONALIZATION: JUNTA MEMBERS COMMENT ON NEW ROLE

REF: (A) LISBON 910; (B) LISBON 794; (C) LISBON 906

SUMMARY: FEB 17 ASSEMBLY OF AFM LED TO THE TENTATIVE ADOPTION OF A COMPROMISE PLAN OFFERED TO ASSEMBLY BY THE COUNCIL OF 20 (REFTEL A). COMPROMISE WOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL LEGISLATIVE POWERS TO THE JUNTA OF NATIONAL SALVATION (JSN). END SUMMARY

1. TWO SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS ON FEB 18 BETWEEN DATT AND GENERAL MENDES DIAS C/S PORTUGUESE AIR FORCE AND WITH GENERAL PINHO FREIRE, DEPUTY C/S OF ARMED FORCES, BOTH OF WHOM ARE MEMBERS OF JSN REVEALED THAT:

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(A) NEW LEGISLATIVE POWERS HAVE BEEN GRANTED TO THE JSN IN

SECURITY FIELDS (REF B, PARA 1). MENDES DIAS EXPLAINED THAT THE JSN IS ANXIOUS TO ADJUDICATE THE CASE OF THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH THE PIZ AND DGS (SECRET POLITICAL POLICE) OF THE FORMER REGIME. HE SAID THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO RESOLUTION OF THESE CASES BECAUSE THERE EXISTS NO REVOLUTIONARY LEGISLATION BY WHICH TO PROSECUTE THEM, NOR THOSE ARRESTED AFTER SEP 28.

(B) THE OTHER ASPECT OF NEW LEGISLATION WOULD GIVE THE JUNTA POWERS TO ENSURE THAT THE PRESENT, RATHER VAGUE, AFM PROGRAM IF CORRECTLY IMPLEMENTED BY WHATEVER GOVERNING PARTY OR COALITION MAY BE ELECTED IN THE FUTURE.

(C) IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD, THE JUNTA IS TO BE GIVEN POWER TO INTERPRET THE ECONOMIC PLAN (WHICH PINHO FREIRE DESCRIBED AS VAGUE ON DETAILS). MENDES DIAS AND PINHO FREIRE BOTH STATED LEGISLATIVE POWERS NEEDED TO CONTROL LABOR I.E., PREVENT CRIPPLING STRIKES AND STIMULATE SAGGING ECONOMY. PINHO FREIRE SAID THAT PORTUGAL IS INVOLVED IN AN EFFORT TO PROVE THAT DEMOCRACY CAN SUCCEED IN SPITE OF THE "IBERIAN TENDENCIES TOWARD ANARCHY."

(D) AFM WILL CONSULT WITH POLITICAL PARTIES AND NEGOTIATE WITH THEM THE RULES OF THE POLITICAL GAME FOR THE COMING MONTHS. PINHO FREIRE IS A MAJOR PARTICIPANT IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID THE NEGOTIATIONS MUST GO ON IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A PLATFORM FOR EACH PARTY WHICH MEETS A STANDARD ACCEPTABLE TO THE AFM. ALTHOUGH HE WOULD NOT ELABORATE ON THOSE STANDARDS, HE SAID THAT THEY DO EXIST AND ARE KNOWN TO THE COUNCIL OF TWENTY. TWO OF THE ELEMENTS OF MINIMUM STANDARDS DESCRIBED BO BOTH MENDES DIAS AND PINHO FREIRE WERE (1) ACCEPTANCE OF THE ECONOMIC PLAN FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS AND (2) ACCEPTANCE OF THE JSN INTERPRETATION OF BOTH THE AFM PROGRAM AND THE ECONOMIC PLAN.

2. COMMENT: THE JUNTA'S POWERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN INCREASED IN THE AREA OF REMOVING SALAZAR-CAETANO ADHERENTS FROM THE POLITICAL ARENA, ALTHOUGH HOW FAR THE JUNTA WILL PROCEED STILL REMAINS TO BE SEEN. ITEMS (B), (C) AND (D) ABOVE ARE THE NEW ELEMENTS IN THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION SCENARIO. WHILE AN ASSESSMENT CAN ONLY BE TENTATIVE AT THIS POINT, IT IS ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT THE AFM APPEARS TO BE MOVING THE LOCUS OF ITS INFLUENCE TOWARDS THE JSN, AND ITS SENIOR OFFICERS, AND AWAY FROM THE RADICALIZED JUNIOR OFFICERS.

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CRITICAL QUESTION STILL AS ISSUE, HOWEVER, IS HOW JUNTA WILL PROCEED TO IMPLEMENT MANDATE DESCRIBED PARAGRAPH (B).
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